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February 15, 2008

The Honorable Frank Wood  
Capitol  
Des Moines IA 50319

Re: BrailleNotes

Dear Senator Wood:

In response to your inquiry at the meeting of the Education Appropriations Subcommittee on February 6, you asked how many BrailleNotes that Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School owned.

IBSSS has 13 BrailleNotes; 3 BrailleSenses; and 1 PacMate (all are similar electronic notetakers). The School has two assistive technology consultants who use these to work with students and their teachers and parents to teach them how to use the devices. The BrailleNotes are on loan to the student. Once it is clear that the student will continue to use one for their school career, the local school usually purchases one for their use.

The School's electronic notetakers are also used as "loaners" when devices owned by districts need to be sent in for repairs. Unfortunately, this happens often when young students use such sophisticated technology. Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School also conducts "BrailleNote clubs" in various parts of the state for students who use them to get together and improve their skills.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Andrew J. Baumert

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cc: Dwayne Ferguson, LSA  
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